

FREE MILITARY SERVICE

A.C.A. § 24-7-602

A member of the Arkansas Teacher Retirement System who entered the Armed Forces of the United States between July 1, 1937, and June 30, 1973, may establish that active duty service in this System without cost, provided the following conditions are met:

1. Service must be the initial enlistment. Reenlistment or voluntary extension of the initial enlistment is not considered compulsory and shall not be allowed as service credit.
2. Military service shall not exceed five (5) years, and the years to be credited shall be those closest to the teaching service.
3. Crediting of military service will require the completion of Form M-1, provided by the System, and official military documents listing the entry and discharge dates of the first enlistment or induction.
4. Must have received an honorable discharge; and
5. The period of military service credit shall be based on 120 days of service rendered during a fiscal year, July 1 through June 30. For military service, the actual number of days in the month shall be counted. Fractional years of service cannot be credited prior to July 1, 1971. Days on both ends of the military time period may be combined to provide a year of service credited prior to July 1, 1971, if:
 - A. The minimum number of days to be combined is 120;
 - B. The maximum number of fiscal years to be counted is two (2); and
 - C. Combined military service may not be credited during fiscal years in which the member received credit for a year of teaching service.
6. All military service credited prior to July 1, 1986, is contributory service.
7. Military service may be established at any time after entrance into the System but official crediting shall be effective upon completion of five (5) years of actual service in the Arkansas Teacher Retirement System, excluding military service credit.

8. The member must not be receiving, nor be eligible to receive, federal military retirement pay (other than disability). Recertification of military service credit will be required for all service credited after 1969 at retirement.
9. Members receiving concurrent military retirement benefits and Veterans Administration disability compensation¹ must have a service-related Veterans Administration rating of 50% or higher in order to qualify for the disability eligibility requirement in paragraph No. 8 above.
10. The policies covering free military service credited to a member of the Teacher Retirement System apply to free military service credit under reciprocity, provided the member has five (5) years of actual service credit in the Arkansas Teacher Retirement System, excluding military service.
11. Under Act 793 of 1977, free military service may be established if membership is transferred after completing five (5) years of actual service in the Arkansas Teacher Retirement System.

Amended: April 26, 2007
October 6, 2008

¹ Veterans Affairs compensation is a benefit paid on the basis of the kind and severity of a disability that happened as a result of active duty in military service. A Veterans Affairs pension is a benefit paid on the basis of a disability that was not a result of active service in the military and is based on income. ATRS must use VA compensation as disability eligibility, not VA pension.